

REMARKS

Overview

This amendment is being filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination under 37 CFR §1.114. Claims 1-22 have been cancelled. New claims 23-44 have been added. Applicants believe no new matter has been added by the foregoing amendment, full support therefore being shown in the drawings and specification as filed. Support for the new claims can be found at least in Figures 1, 2, 7 and 8, and in the specification on pages 13 and 14.

Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claims Rejections

Claims 1-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter Applicants regard as the invention. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102b as anticipated by Kaldenberg, U.S. Patent No. 3,529,881.

Claims 1-22 have been canceled without prejudice, rendering the above-listed claim rejections moot.

New Claims

Applicants believe none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the combination of limitations recited in new independent claims 23, 33 and 43.

Applicants believe none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a sound tray extending across the frontal frame below the bottom portion of the door, the sound tray having a first edge portion pivotally mounted to the bottom portion of the door such that the sound tray pivots relative to the door when the door is opened as recited in claim 23. Applicants respectfully submit that, for at least this reason, claim 23 is patentable over the cited references. As claims 24-32 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 23, these claims should also be deemed patentable.

With respect to claim 33, Applicants believe none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a sound tray extending substantially horizontally from below the bottom portion of the door, the sound tray having a first edge portion pivotally mounted to the bottom portion of the door such that the sound tray pivots relative to the door when the door is opened as specifically recited. Applicants respectfully submit that, for at least this reason, claim 33 is patentable over the cited references. As claims 34-42 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 33, these claims should also be deemed patentable.

Applicants believe none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a sound tray extending rearwardly from the bottom portion of the door and between a first upstanding side portion and a second upstanding side portion of the frontal frame, the sound tray having a first edge portion pivotally mounted to the bottom portion of the door such that the sound tray pivots relative to the door when the door is opened as recited in claim 43. Applicants respectfully submit that, for at least this reason, claim 43 is patentable over the cited references. As claim 44 depends directly claim 43, this claim should also be deemed patentable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to all of the outstanding rejections, and Applicants therefore respectfully request that this amendment be entered. Reconsideration and passage to issuance is respectfully requested.

The Applicants herewith petition the Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office to extend the time for reply to the Office Action dated March 22, 2007 for one month from June 22, 2007 to July 22, 2007. Please charge deposit account number 23-1660, in the amount of \$120 to cover the cost of the extension.

A charge to Deposit Account No. 23-1660 in the amount of \$790.00 has been authorized for the RCE. No additional fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this filing. However, please consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 23-1660.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims remaining in the application are allowable over the prior art of record. Early notification of allowability of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: July 23, 2007

WHIRLPOOL PATENTS COMPANY
500 Renaissance Drive – Ste. 102 MD750
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

/Michael D. Lafrenz/

Michael D. Lafrenz, Reg. No. 56,908
Telephone (269) 923-7441